



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Case #: ZBA 2015-96
Date: November 12, 2015
Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 41 Horace Street

Applicant Name: Ihor Chaban
Applicant Address: 41 Horace Street, Somerville, MA 02143
Owner Name: Ihor Chaban
Owner Address: 41 Horace Street, Somerville, MA 02143
Alderman: Maryanne Heuston

Legal Notice: Applicant & Owner, Ihor Chaban, seeks a Special Permit to alter a nonconforming single-family structure (SZO §4.4.1) to add 60sf addition to the second floor. RB zone. Ward 2.

Dates of Public Hearing: November 18, 2015

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The property is an approximately 1,087 square foot single-family house on a 3,073 square foot lot. There is a one-story projection on the front of the house that serves as the entryway. The projection is located on the front property line.
2. Proposal: The proposal is to add a 60 square foot addition on the second floor. The addition would be over the existing one-story portion of the house and extend over the front stairs. This space would serve as an alcove off of an existing bedroom.



3. Green Building Practices: The applicant is planning to reuse some of the reclaimed materials, use low VOC-emitting paints and varnishes, and separate and recycle waste and excess materials.

4. Comments:

Fire Prevention: Fire Prevention does not have any comments at this time.

Ward Alderman: Alderman Heuston has not heard yet from abutters regarding this proposal.

II. FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT (SZO §4.4.1):

In order to grant a special permit, the SPGA must make certain findings and determinations as outlined in §5.1.4 of the SZO. This section of the report goes through §5.1.4 in detail.

1. Information Supplied:

The Staff finds that the information provided by the Applicant conforms to the requirements of §5.1.2 of the SZO and allows for a comprehensive analysis of the project with respect to the required Special Permits.

2. Compliance with Standards: *The Applicant must comply "with such criteria or standards as may be set forth in this Ordinance which refer to the granting of the requested special permit."*

The structure is currently nonconforming with respect to the following dimensional requirements: lot area, and front and side yard setbacks.

The proposal will impact the following nonconforming dimensions: front and side yard setbacks. The house is on the front and side yard setback that abuts the train tracks and the proposal will be built along these property lines. This alteration to a nonconforming structure requires the Applicant to obtain special permits under §4.4.1 of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO).

Section 4.4.1 states that "[l]awfully existing one-and two-family dwellings which are only used as residences, which are nonconforming with respect to dimensional requirements, may be enlarged, extended, renovated or altered by special permit granted by the SPGA in accordance with the procedures of Article 5."

In considering a special permit under §4.4 of the SZO, Staff find that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure. The proposal has been designed with setbacks that minimally impact the neighbors as the side yard abuts the railroad tracks. The house will continue to be conforming to the FAR requirements of the SZO.

3. Consistency with Purposes: *The Applicant has to ensure that the project "is consistent with (1) the general purposes of this Ordinance as set forth in Article 1, and (2) the purposes, provisions, and specific objectives applicable to the requested special permit which may be set forth elsewhere in this Ordinance, such as, but not limited to, those purposes at the beginning of the various Articles."*

The proposal is consistent with the general purposes of the Ordinance as set forth under §1.2, which includes, but is not limited to providing for and maintaining the uniquely integrated structure of uses in the City.

The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the Residence B district in altering the single-family house. The purpose of the district is, "[t]o establish and preserve medium density neighborhoods of one-, two- and three-family homes, free from other uses except those which are both compatible with and convenient to the residents of such districts."

4. Site and Area Compatibility: *The Applicant has to ensure that the project "(i)s designed in a manner that is compatible with the characteristics of the built and unbuilt surrounding area, including land uses."*

The project has been designed to be compatible with the house and surrounding land uses. The additional massing is sympathetic to the design of the house. The existing front entryway appears tacked on and the addition will make this projection from the main structure more prominent and proportional to the overall massing of the house. The addition will have a gable roof with a slope that matches that of the main house.

7. Housing Impact: *Will not create adverse impacts on the stock of existing affordable housing.*

The addition will not greatly impact the affordability of the house.

8. SomerVision Plan: *Complies with the applicable goals, policies and actions of the SomerVision plan, including the following, as appropriate: Preserve and enhance the character of Somerville's neighborhoods, transform key opportunity areas, preserve and expand an integrated, balanced mix of safe, affordable and environmentally sound rental and homeownership units for households of all sizes and types from diverse social and economic groups; and, make Somerville a regional employment center with a mix of diverse and high-quality jobs. The areas in the SomerVision map that are designated as enhance and transform should most significantly contribute towards the SomerVision goals that are outlined in the table below. The areas marked as conserve are not expected to greatly increase the figures in the table since these areas are not intended for large scale change.*

A small addition that maintains the character of the single-family house is not counter to the goals of SomerVision.

<u>SomerVision Summary</u>	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Proposed</i>
<i>Dwelling Units:</i>	1	1

III. RECOMMENDATION**Special Permit under §4.4.1**

Based on the materials submitted by the Applicant, the above findings and subject to the following conditions, the Planning Staff recommends **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL** of the requested **SPECIAL PERMIT**.

The recommendation is based upon a technical analysis by Planning Staff of the application material based upon the required findings of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, and is based only upon information submitted prior to the public hearing. This report may be revised or updated with new recommendations, findings and/or conditions based upon additional information provided to the Planning Staff during the public hearing process.

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes						
1	Approval is for the 60sf second floor addition. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:	BP/CO	ISD/ Plng.							
	<table><tr><th>Date (Stamp Date)</th><th>Submission</th></tr><tr><td>October 15, 2015</td><td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td></tr><tr><td>(November 12, 2015)</td><td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Plot Plan, existing and proposed elevations, proposed rendering, 1st floor plan, existing and proposed 2nd floor plan)</td></tr></table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	October 15, 2015	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	(November 12, 2015)	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Plot Plan, existing and proposed elevations, proposed rendering, 1st floor plan, existing and proposed 2 nd floor plan)
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Any changes to the approved plans that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval.										
2	The siding, trim, windows, and roof materials shall match or be complimentary to the materials on the main structure.	Final sign off	Plng.							
Final Sign-Off										
3	The Applicant shall contact Planning Staff at least five working days in advance of a request for a final inspection by Inspectional Services to ensure the proposal was constructed in accordance with the plans and information submitted and the conditions attached to this approval.	Final sign off	Plng.							

